tion near the top of the Soviet bureaucracy? Not only because a man of independence and honor could never reach a high position in the Soviet despotism and would hardly survive all the purges, but also because the rigid scale of values of the Soviet regime excludes and weeds out such qualities as decency, dignity, and independence in those who serve the Moloch of the totalitarian state. The iron grip of the Kremlin leaves no place for simple human feelings and sympathy.

In my years of wandering in foreign countries, after the defeat of democracy in Russia, I have realized the deep and tragic impact of the Communist coup—the glorified "ten days"—on world affairs. In Italy, France, Germany, and Austria my wife and I saw Communist parties engaged in a bitter struggle against liberal forces—especially the moderate Socialists—trying to undermine people's devotion to democratic institutions, to kindle nationalistic passions, occasionally even joining with the forces of darkest reaction in order to weaken the existing system supported by the majority. Everywhere in Europe local Communist parties operated as battering rams directed by an invisible force from the Kremlin against the strongholds of freedom and democracy. Communism has been a force of reaction, disorder, and war in Europe.

Time and again I have asked myself what the course of events in the world would have been after World War I if Russia had not emerged from it as a totalitarian dictatorship. Neither Mussolini in Italy nor Hitler in Germany would have come to power if the local Communists, supported and directed by Moscow, had not paved their way to victory. Without Hitler, there would have been no Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty to usher in World War II.

Going further back, one may answer that Lenin's coup would have been impossible in Russia if the second Russian revolution had not exploded in the midst of war, if the country had entered the road of constitutional reforms a decade earlier, after the first revolution.

Historical events are interwoven in a fantastic pattern. Contemporaries find it hard to discern its intricate designs, and the impact of the Russian Drama is one of the greatest mysteries of our time. I do not pretend to have solved this mystery, but perhaps this book will make the reader realize that the time and events described have more than a casual relation to, and bearing on, the dire problems the world is facing now.

W. S. W.

Washington, D.C.
April, 1960